

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Fords Prairie Access Road Construction and Tap Realignment

LURR No.: 20180048

Project Manager: Wendy Jansen, TERR-Olympia

Location: Lewis County, Washington

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B.4.9 Multiple use of powerline rights-of-way

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to allow the City of Centralia to construct an access road along the southern portion of the BPA fee-owned right-of-way and realign the last span of the Fords Prairie Tap in the Fords Prairie Tap to Chehalis-Centralia No. 2 transmission line right-of-way.

The new access road would allow the City of Centralia emergency access to their newly- expanded substation. Access road construction would occur in the BPA right-of-way in an area about 175 feet by 30 feet. The road would require about 15 inches of excavation along the proposed road bed. The excavation area would be filled with soil and a 3- to 4-inch diameter quarry rock with a final crushed rock layer for the road bed. The City of Centralia would also relocate the final span of the existing 115-kilovolt tap line. The relocated span would extend from an existing city-owned pole outside of the BPA right-of-way to BPA structure 1/1 of the Fords Prairie Tap to Chehalis-Centralia No. 2 transmission line. The work area associated with the tap line span relocation would be about 20-feet by 60-feet and would partially overlap the access road work area.

Findings: In accordance with Section 1021.410(b) of the Department of Energy's (DOE) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Regulations (57 FR 15144, Apr. 24, 1992, as amended at 61 FR 36221-36243, July 9, 1996; 61 FR 64608, Dec. 6, 1996, 76 FR 63764, Nov. 14, 2011), BPA has determined that the proposed action:

- (1) fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix B of 10 CFR 1021, Subpart D (see attached Environmental Checklist);
- (2) does not present any extraordinary circumstances that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal; and
- (3) has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion.

Based on these determinations, BPA finds that the proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

/s/ Katey Grange

Katey Grange
Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: April 4, 2018

Attachment(s): Environmental Checklist

Categorical Exclusion Environmental Checklist

This checklist documents environmental considerations for the proposed project and explains why the project would not have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources and would meet other integral elements of the applied categorical exclusion.

Proposed Action: Fords Prairie Access Road Construction and Tap Realignment

Project Site Description

The emergency access road and tap realignment area is located between a railroad track, a light industrial development, and an existing substation. Pastures and scattered rural development, both light industrial and residential, extend beyond the adjacent land uses. The Chehalis River is about 0.75 miles to the west of the site and there are no wetlands, waterbodies, or hydric soils present in the project area as confirmed via desktop resources (soil survey, National Hydrologic Database, topo and aerial image review) and a site visit. The dominant vegetation community in the project area consists of mowed grass and herbaceous vegetation within the maintained right-of-way. Soils are a gravelly loam.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
<p>1. Historic and Cultural Resources</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Consultation was initiated on January 2, 2018 when the project’s Area of Potential Effect (APE) was submitted to the Washington State Department of Historic Preservation (DAHP) and the Cowlitz and Chehalis Tribes. DAHP concurred with the project APE via a letter dated January 3, 2018 and the Cowlitz Tribe responded via email on January 4, 2018 requesting to be involved with the project and that an inadvertent discoveries plan be implemented during construction.</p> <p>Based on a cultural resources survey of the APE, BPA determined that the project would have no adverse effect on cultural or historic resources. The BPA determination along with a field survey report was submitted to the consulting parties on February 7, 2018. DAHP concurred with BPA’s determination on the same day. No tribal response was received within 30 days.</p> <p>An inadvertent discoveries plan will be provided to the City of Centralia for use during construction.</p>		
<p>2. Geology and Soils</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Soil disturbed by access road construction would be compacted and stabilized with an imported gravel road surface.</p>		
<p>3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> About 0.12 acre of vegetation would be replaced with gravel. Removed vegetation would be low-growing grasses that are actively maintained in the right-of-way. No sensitive or ESA-listed plants are present within the project area.</p>		
<p>4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>Explanation:</u> Wildlife may be temporarily disturbed by noise generated by construction equipment and increased human presence during construction. Noise, human presence, and equipment activity would be consistent with</p>		

activities currently occurring at adjacent land uses. About 0.12 acre of managed, herbaceous habitat would be lost due to the installation of the access road. Due to the proximity to abundant nearby undeveloped habitat that is of higher quality, the quantity of lost herbaceous habitat associated with the project would be minor. No sensitive or ESA-listed wildlife or habitats are present within the project area.

5. **Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish** (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)

Explanation: No waterbodies are located within or adjacent to the project area.

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: No wetlands are located within or adjacent to the project area.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: No new wells or groundwater use is proposed.

8. **Land Use and Specially Designated Areas**

Explanation: No specially-designated land uses are present in the area. The project activities would be consistent and compatible with land uses within and adjacent to the project area.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: The project activities would be consistent and compatible with the visual quality associated with the land uses in and near the project area.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: A small amount of dust and vehicle emissions would occur during construction.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: A temporary increase in noise would occur during construction.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: No impact to human health and safety is anticipated.

Evaluation of Other Integral Elements

The proposed project would also meet conditions that are integral elements of the categorical exclusion. The project would not:

- Threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders.

Explanation, if necessary:

- Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators) that are not otherwise categorically excluded.

Explanation, if necessary:

- Disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA excluded petroleum and natural gas

products that preexist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases.

Explanation, if necessary:

- Involve genetically engineered organisms, synthetic biology, governmentally designated noxious weeds, or invasive species, unless the proposed activity would be contained or confined in a manner designed and operated to prevent unauthorized release into the environment and conducted in accordance with applicable requirements, such as those of the Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Institutes of Health.

Explanation, if necessary:

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: BPA is the underlying landowner. The City of Centraila is working with any adjacent landowners as needed.

Based on the foregoing, this proposed project does not have the potential to cause significant impacts to any environmentally sensitive resource.

Signed: /s/ Katey Grange
Katey Grange, ECT-4

Date: April 4, 2018